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have so reduced the power, and humbled the pride of the enemy, as to make it probable that negotiations now entered upon might be closed by a safe and honourable peace. And it is certain that the rejection by the enemy, of reasonable conditions of peace, would give new vigour to the general effort of Europe to throw off his yoke.

That the petition now read, be approved and adopted.

That the Members for the County be requested to present the petition to the House of Commons.

That the resolutions and petition of this day be printed in such of the London and provincial papers, as the Chairman shall think proper.

JOSIAH WEDGWOOD, Chairman.

The chairman having left the chair,
Resolved, That the cordial thanks of this Meeting be given to the chairman, for his impartial conduct this day, and for the zeal and ability he has uniformly manifested to promote the interests of this neighbourhood.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled: the humble Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the Staffordshire Potteries,

Showeth,

That your petitioners are perfectly sensible of the dependence of their personal and local interests on the general well-being of their country, and of the inseparable connexion of national safety and prosperity with national honour. Deeply impressed with that conviction and warmly devoted to the public welfare, for which they are ready to make every sacrifice, and endure every privation, your petitioners humbly conceive that they owe it to Parliament and their Country, as well as to themselves, to lay before this House a short and plain statement of their present unfortunate condition, and to pray for such relief as to your wisdom shall seem effectual.

The exclusion of your petitioners' produce from their accustomed markets for nearly five years, by the tyrannical edicts of the enemy, aided, as your petitioners presume to think, by those mistaken measures which were intended to counteract them, produced those scenes of misery in the manufacturing districts of Great Britain, which were laid before the last Parliament, in the course of their Inquiry into

the effects of his Majesty's Orders in Council.

These sufferings have been aggravated by the entire shutting up of the market of the United States of America, being by far the most considerable market that your petitioners enjoyed.

A large body of our labourers now derive a subsistence, necessarily scanty, either from parish relief, or from the bounty of their employers. The demands on both these funds are daily increasing, and their supply diminishing. Contributors to the poor-rates are becoming paupers. Master manufacturers are expending their own means of security against ruin; and the workmen, under the pressure of hopeless poverty, are rapidly losing the spirit of independence which formerly distinguished them.

The prospect of opening the ports of the North of Europe, in consequence of the defeat of the French armies in Russia, partial as it is, and dependant as it must be, upon the uncertain events of war, has already diffused a hope and spirit among the manufacturers, sufficient to show your honourable House, the general conviction of that great and certain relief which would arise from the restoration of our ancient commercial intercourse, by the establishment of a general peace.

Your petitioners, do, therefore, most earnestly implore your honourable House to consider whether it be not possible to make the offer of such reasonable conditions of peace, as the present happy turn of affairs might enable Great Britain, and the powers connected with her in alliance, or friendship, to propose, with perfect safety to their honour, with some hope that they might be accepted by a weakened and humble enemy, and with an absolute certainty, that his rejection of them, would give new vigour to the general effort of Europe to throw off his yoke. And your petitioners shall ever pray.

Offers for negotiation made by France since the breaking out of the present war in 1803. From Philips's Monthly Magazine.

I. On assuming the imperial title, Bonaparte addressed a letter to the king of Great Britain, dated 2d, Jan. 1803. In this he stated that, "His first wish was for peace, and that he considered it as no disgrace to make the first step." He observed, "that the war was without an object, and that it was a melancholy business to cause

two nations to fight, merely for the sake of fighting." In answer, Lord Mulgrave, then secretary of state, informed Bonaparte, "That there was no object which his Majesty had more at heart than to avail himself of the first opportunity to procure again for his subjects the advantages of a peace founded on basis which might not be incompatible with the permanent security and essential interests of his dominions; but, that his Majesty felt it impossible to answer more particularly to the overture that had been made to him, till he had time to communicate with the powers on the Continent, *with whom he was engaged in confidential connections and relations*; and particularly the Emperor of Russia, who had given the strongest proofs of the wisdom and elevation of the sentiments by which he was animated, and the lively interest which he took in the safety and independence of the continent." Of course no further correspondence took place.

II. On the 8th of March, 1806, M. Talleyrand transmitted to Mr. Fox, an extract from a speech of Napoleon to the legislative body, to the following effect: "I desire peace with England. On my part I shall never delay it a moment: I shall always be ready to conclude it, taking for its basis the stipulations of the treaty of Amiens." This led the way to the negotiation carried on by Mr. Fox to the time of his death, and afterwards by Lord Grey, and which was broken off by our refusing to negotiate otherwise than in conjunction with Russia; Lord Lauderdale having declared, that England "was resolved not to make peace, without obtaining for Russia all the objects on which she insisted, which were more interesting, if possible, to England, than those points which might be considered as peculiarly connected with her own interests."

This result was the more to be regretted, as it had been proposed on the part of the French Emperor not only to restore Hanover to his Majesty without any compensation, but also to give up Malta and the Cape of Good Hope; his minister Talleyrand, having observed, that "Hanover was for the honour of the Crown, Malta for the honour of the Navy, and the Cape of Good Hope for the honour of the British Commerce."

III. On the 18th April, 1807, the Austrian ambassador in London, Prince Stahremberg, transmitted to his Majesty's ministers, a proposal from the Emperor of Austria, of his friendly intention "for ef-

fecting a reconciliation between the belligerent powers." Mr. Canning, then Secretary of State, replied, that "his Majesty would willingly accede to such negotiations, whenever the consent of the other parties interested in them should be obtained;" and that "his Majesty would lose no time in communicating with such powers, and, if their views should be favourable to his Imperial Majesty's proposal, in concerting with them the mode in which negotiations should be opened." It does not appear that the British ministry ever adopted any measures for consulting their allies on this subject; and consequently the proposal was of no avail.

IV. On the 1st August, 1807, M. Alopeus, the Russian Ambassador at London, notified to the British ministry, that "the Emperor of Russia had, by the treaty of Tilsit, offered himself as a mediator of peace between England and France, provided, his mediation was accepted within the space of one month." In reply, Mr. Canning "required, as a preliminary, the communication of the treaty of Tilsit, and the statement of those equitable and honourable principles, upon which his Imperial Majesty expresses his belief that France is desirous of concluding a peace with Great Britain." The negotiation was afterwards carried on by Lord G. L. Gower, at Petersburg, with the Russian ministry; in the course of which it was conceived, that an opportunity was afforded of detaching Russia from the interests of France. The discussion was accordingly continued *with other views than those of peace*. In the official correspondence it appears, that Mr. Canning informed the British Envoy, that "the establishment of future good understanding between this country and Russia, and the concert of measures to be taken, with a view to future exertion, were alone the proper subjects of discussion between the two governments." This negotiation was, however, suddenly terminated by our attack upon Copenhagen; which so exasperated the Emperor of Russia, that he declared, that "no arrangements should take place between Russia and England, until the latter should have given satisfaction to Denmark;" at the same time expressing his expectation, that "his Britannic Majesty, instead of permitting his ministers, as had lately been the case, to scatter anew the seeds of war, would lend his assistance to the conclusion of peace with France."

V. On the 20th of November, 1807,

Prince Strahremberg, the Austrian ambassador, officially and earnestly requested his Britannic Majesty, to "declare his intentions in evincing his disposition to enter into a negotiation for a maritime peace, upon a basis suitable to the reciprocal interests of the powers who might take a part in it." To this Mr. Canning replied, that "his Majesty was then, as he had all times been, prepared to enter into a negotiation, for the conclusion of such a peace as should settle on equal terms the respective interests of the powers engaged in the war, as should be consistent with his Majesty's fidelity to his allies, and should provide for the tranquillity and security of Europe." In consequence of this answer, the Austrian minister, about five weeks afterwards, informed the British ministry, that, "in consequence of the pacific disposition of his Britannic Majesty, he was charged to propose to the British ministry to send immediately plenipotentiaries to Paris for the purpose of treating for the establishment of peace between all the powers at war with England;" adding, that "this must furnish a proof of the good faith and of the sincere intention of France to put an end to the calamities of war." He notified, at the same time, that "he was authorised to give passports to the ministers appointed for that purpose." After a long correspondence, Mr. Canning informed the Austrian minister, that "his Majesty could not again consent to send his plenipotentiaries to a hostile capital." The further interference of Prince Strahremberg was, at the same time, effectually prohibited, by Mr. Canning informing him, that "his Majesty had not given him any authority to speak in the name of his Majesty to the government of France." The Austrian ambassador immediately demanded his passports; and Austria was added to the list of our enemies.

VI. In October, 1808, the Emperors of France and Russia met in amity at Erfurth, for the purpose of adjusting the peace of Europe, and avoiding the delays and alleged equivocations, which had attended former negotiations; and, as England had recently declared that she continued the war for Russian objects, the participation of Russia in the first overture appeared likely to remove every difficulty. The two Emperors accordingly addressed the following perspicuous letter to the King of England:

"SIRE,—The present circumstances of Europe have brought us together at Er-

furth. Our first thought is to yield to the wish and the wants of every people, and to seek, in a speedy pacification with your Majesty, the most efficacious remedy for the miseries which oppress all nations. We make known to your Majesty our sincere desire in this respect by the present letter.

"The long and bloody war which has torn the continent is at an end, without the possibility of being renewed. Many changes have taken place in Europe; many states have been overthrown. The cause is to be found in the state of agitation and misery in which the stagnation of maritime commerce has placed the greatest nations. Still greater changes may yet take place, and all of them contrary to the policy of the English nation. Peace, then, is at once the interest of the continent, as it is the interest of the people of Great Britain.

"We unite in intreating your Majesty to listen to the voice of humanity, silencing that of the passions; to seek to conciliate all interests, with the intention of arriving at the object, and by that means to preserve all the powers which exist, and to insure the happiness of Europe, and of this generation, at the head of which Providence has placed us.

"ALEXANDER.—NAPOLEON."

To this overture, characterized by a frankness which has perhaps no example in ancient or modern history, Mr. Canning, the English Secretary, replied to the Russian minister, that "however desirable his Majesty might be to reply directly to his Majesty the Emperor of Russia, he found it impossible to adopt that mark of respect towards the Emperor of Russia, without at the same time acknowledging titles which his Majesty never had acknowledged; that his Majesty will hasten to communicate to his Majesty the King of Sweden, and to the existing government of Spain, the proposals which have been made to him; and that it is absolutely necessary his Majesty should receive an immediate assurance that France acknowledges the government of Spain as party to any negotiation, and that such is the intention of the Emperor of Russia his Majesty cannot doubt." To this unhappy answer the Russian and French ministers replied in a style which bordered on remonstrance, in which the Russian minister exclaimed, that "after fifteen years of war Europe had a right to demand peace;" and the French minister contended, that "the

French government had as much right to demand the admission of the Irish insurgents to be parties to the negotiation as the English had to claim the admission of the Spanish insurgents. Mr. Canning, in his reply to the Russian minister, appealed with much energy to Russia against France; and, in his answer to the French minister, he insisted, that the cause of the Spanish insurgents, was that of the Spanish nation, and the legitimate monarchy of Spain, and that the central and supreme government, acting for Ferdinand VII., must be a party to the negotiation. No answers were given, and thus the alleged purpose of the Imperial meeting at Erfurth was unfortunately deprived of its effect.

VII. In the month of February, 1810, Bonaparte gave the government of Holland to understand, that "its political existence as an independent state, would depend upon the dispositions of the British government, with respect to peace with France." In consequence of this, Mr. Labouchere was despatched, at the instance of Louis Bonaparte, and the Dutch government, from Amsterdam to London, to lay this state of affairs before the British ministry, and to impress upon them how much it would be for the advantage of England, that Holland should not fall under the sovereign dominion of the French empire, but remain an independent power. On his arrival in London, he had an audience with the Marquis Wellesley; to whom he communicated the substance of his instructions, and on whom it appears he endeavoured to impress the conviction, that the general interest well understood, and the lasting prosperity of every commercial state, imperiously required, that the crisis in which Holland was, should not be looked at with indifference. To this application, no official reply was made; but, from the verbal communications of Lord Wellesley, and the general observations and information of Mr. Labouchere, it appeared to him, as stated in his report to the Dutch government, that "the main question of peace or war engaged little of the public attention. That they were reconciled by habit to the continuance of the war; and that its consequences, far from being felt, were rather favourable to private interest. That it must not, however, be inferred, that a settled resolution had been taken to reject all proposals for peace, but that probably, if France showed an inclination of this

kind, the British ministry would afford many facilities; but that, under all the considerations of the times, those which related to Holland were only of a secondary and very remote interest; and that the conviction of the impossibility that any convention respecting that country, could ever, under the influence of France, offer any chance of security to England, unless it was connected with a general arrangement, had blunted all the feeling which Holland could otherwise have inspired; so far, indeed, as not to draw any attention to the very important motives which should induce them to consider this question separately, and under an immediate point of view." In consequence of this, the Dutch envoy took his departure from this country, and Holland, at this moment, composes an integral part of the dominions of France. Thus the very object for which the war was ostensibly commenced, was given up without an effort. On this singular transaction, which was not publicly known in this country, till about twelve months after it had taken place, and which, we believe, never became the subject of Parliamentary discussion, we shall only remark, that although Holland was acting under the influence and controul of France, yet, whilst she existed under a separate government, there still remained a possibility of detaching her, under favourable circumstances, and even of directing her power against our enemies. She was an implement, grasped for the present, by the French ruler, but which might possibly have been wrested from, and turned against him; whereas, she is now annihilated, and her population and resources added to the immense mass of the French empire. And thus, whilst we are interesting ourselves with the capture or loss of a frigate, alterations are silently suffered to take place in the affairs of Europe, which consolidate the dominions of our enemies, and confirm that power which we consider it as the object of the war to destroy.

VIII. On the 17th of April, 1812, the French minister of foreign affairs addressed a letter to the English foreign minister, stating, that Napoleon "constantly actuated by sentiments friendly to moderation and peace, again made a solemn and sincere attempt to put an end to the miseries of war." In proof of the sincerity of the overture, the French minister submitted a project of the terms on which peace might be concluded, stating, that "as the affairs of

the Peninsula, and the two Sicilies, were the points of difference which appeared least to admit of being adjusted, he was authorized to propose an arrangement of them on the following basis:—The integrity of Spain to be guaranteed; France to renounce all idea of extending her dominion beyond the Pyrennees. The present dynasty to be declared independent, and Spain to be governed by a National Constitution of her Cortes. The independence and integrity of Portugal to be also guaranteed, and the House of Braganza to have the sovereign authority. The kingdom of Naples to remain in possession of the present monarch, and the kingdom of Sicily to the guaranteed to the present family of Sicily; and, as a consequence of these stipulations, Spain, Portugal, and Sicily, to be evacuated by the French and English land and naval forces." With respect to the other objects, he proposed, that "each power should retain that of which the other could not deprive it by war;" and stated, that "the Emperor, in taking this step, did not look either to the advantages or losses which France might derive from the war, if it should be prolonged; but was influenced simply by considerations for the interests of humanity, and the peace of his people; and if this fourth attempt should not be attended with success, like those which had preceded it, France should at least have the consolation of thinking, that whatever blood might yet flow, would be

justly imputable to England alone." To these overtures, Lord Castlereagh replied, that "If, as his Royal Highness feared, the meaning of the proposition was, that the royal authority of Spain, and the government established by the Cortes, shall be recognized as residing in the brother of the head of the French government, and the Cortes formed under his authority, and not in the legitimate sovereign Ferdinand VII., and his heirs, and the Extraordinary Assembly of the Cortes, now invested with the power of the government in that kingdom in his name; he was commanded frankly and explicitly to declare, that the obligations of good faith do not permit his Royal Highness to receive a proposition for peace founded on such a basis. But, if the expressions apply to the actual government of Spain, which exercises the sovereign authority in the name of Ferdinand VII., upon an assurance to that effect, the Prince Regent will feel himself disposed to enter into a full explanation upon the basis which has been transmitted, in order to be taken into consideration by his Royal Highness; it being his most earnest wish to contribute in concert with his allies, to the repose of Europe, and to bring about a peace which may be at once honourable, not only for Great Britain and France, but also for those States which are in relations of amity with each of these powers."

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF POLITICS.

IT is our duty to make one little month the limit of our retrospect, yet we cannot, at times, help feeling the desire to open a vista to times more remote. We have always considered the long avenue, and corresponding ranges of Patriarchal trees, rooted in remote antiquity, and spreading their breadth of religious shade as the *sublime* of rural improvement. And somewhat in like manner we should chuse to take a stated walk down the pages of history, stopping, from time to time, to contemplate, in the twilight of

memory, those august personages, and elevated characters, who call for almost religious worship, or at least have commanded our earliest veneration. Iudeed, the only appropriate epitaph of a great man, is the record which history retains of his actions. Mr. Canning, politician and poetaster, may, at the request of the city magistracy, compose his inscription to the memory of William Pitt, but if, by some unaccountable accident, it should be preserved as the one lately discovered on the Rosetta marble, it will not fail to be